

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

THE PLAN — V

Gal. 5:16-18; Eph. 5:16-21

Pastor Miles McPherson – November 17, 2013

MEMORY VERSE

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

(Ephesians 5:18)

DISCUSSION STARTERS

“Dear God, So far today I've done alright I haven't gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy or grumpy, been nasty, selfish or over indulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed, and from then on I'm probably going to need a lot more help.”¹

What new insights into how God wants you to engage in the mission of the church have you gained through this study so far?

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS — THE PLAN, PART FIVE

Read Galatians 5:16-18 together as a group

- What is the battle that Paul describes in these verses?
- What are the evidences of walking in the flesh? (v19-21)
- Which of these evidences show up in your life?
- Contrast that list with the evidences of walking in the Spirit: (v22-24)
- What is Paul's final admonition in v25-26?

Read Ephesians 5:15-21 together as a group

¹ Fair Dinkum Magazine, Issue 57



- How would you connect the thought in v15 with what you just read in Galatians 5?
- Verse 18 commands us to be filled with the Spirit; why did Paul set it in contrast with getting drunk? (*see endnote for more on this*)

NOTE: The Greek for “be filled” (*pleroosthe*) is a present, passive, imperative... in other words, as a “present verb” it has current and ongoing action; as a “passive verb” it is something being done *to* you, not that you are doing; and as an “imperative verb” it is a strong command. It could be translated “*be continually being filled with the Spirit...*”

- What do verses 19-21 describe as the results of being filled with the Spirit?
- What does Acts 1:8 describe as the result of being filled with the Spirit?
- What does it mean to be filled? *to control; to completely occupy*

KEY POINT: Though the Spirit lives in all believers, He doesn’t fill all believers!

How to be filled with the Holy Spirit

1. Examine yourself and confess your sin

He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. Proverbs 28:13

2. Surrender yourself completely to God

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Romans 12:1

3. Ask to be filled

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! Luke 11:13

Since we’re commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18), and God promises to hear and answer any prayer according to his will (1 John 5:14-15), we can confidently ask God to do what he already wants to do in our lives!

GROUP ACTIVITY

- Take 5 min. of silent examination and prayer before the Lord, practicing the three steps above.
- Group prayer time: focus on praising God and giving thanks for the Spirit’s filling and his desire to work in each of our lives!



Spiritual Breathing (Bill Bright²)

If you become aware of an area of your life (an attitude or an action) that is displeasing to the Lord, even though you are walking with Him and sincerely desiring to serve Him, simply thank God that He has forgiven your sins—past, present, and future—on the basis of Christ’s death on the cross. Claim His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to have fellowship with Him. If you retake the throne of your life through sin—a definite act of disobedience—breathe spiritually. Spiritual Breathing (exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure) is an exercise in faith that enables you to experience God’s love and forgiveness.

1. **Exhale:** Confess your sin—agree with God concerning your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness of it, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1–25. Confession involves repentance—a change in attitude and action.
2. **Inhale:** Surrender the control of your life to Christ, and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit by faith. Trust that He now directs and empowers you, according to the command of Ephesians 5:18 and the promise of 1 John 5:14,15

Notes:

ⁱ **NOTE on Eph 5:18:** Going from the general to the specific, Paul explained how wisdom, as an intellectual and spiritual capacity, works out in one’s conduct. Verse 18 includes a negative command and a positive one. The negative is to abstain from getting **drunk on wine** with which there is incorrigibility. The word *asōtia* is translated **debauchery** (NIV, RSV), “excess” (KJV), “riot” (ASV), and “dissipation” (NASB). All these give the idea of profligate or licentious living that is wasteful. In this verse the literal sense of incorrigibility seems best, for a drunken man acts abnormally. Rather than controlling himself, the wine controls him. Conversely, the positive command is, **Be filled with the Spirit**. Thus a believer, rather than controlling himself, is controlled by the Holy Spirit. It may be more accurate to say that the Holy Spirit is the “Agent” of the filling (cf. Gal. 5:16) and Christ is the Content of the filling (Col. 3:15). Thus in this relationship, as a believer is yielded to the Lord and controlled by Him, he increasingly manifests the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). The Spirit’s indwelling (John 7:37–39; 14:17; Rom. 5:5; 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:12; 6:19–20; 1 John 3:24; 4:13), sealing (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30), and baptism (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27) occur at the time of regeneration and thus are not commanded. However, believers *are* commanded to be filled constantly with the Holy Spirit. Each Christian has all the Spirit, but the command here is that the Spirit have all of him. The wise walk, then, is one that is characterized by the Holy Spirit’s control. (Harold W. Hoehner, "Ephesians" In , in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), Eph 5:18.)

² Have You Made The Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-filled Life? P15 (<http://www.campuscrusade.com/downloads/SFL.pdf>)

